

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, PCAT, MO

SUBJECT:CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER (CAT) TALKS BRIEFINGS

1. ON AUGUST 24 PM BRIEFED EMBASSY OF MOROCCO CHARGE
D'AFFAIRES/COUNSELOR (ECONOMIC AFFAIRS) MOHAMMED BENJELLOUN
ON RECENT US-USSR CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT
TALKS IN HELSINKI WITH NEA/RA AND NEA/AFN REPS ATTENDING,
ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

BEGIN TEXT OF TALKING POINTS:

A. BACKGROUND

--THE US AND SOVIET SIDES HAVE MET THREE TIMES TO DISCUSS
CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT. A SUBSTANTIVE DIALOGUE REALLY
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BEGAN ONLY IN MAY (IN HELSINKI), AFTER WHICH THE SIDES
ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE IN WHICH THEY AGREED (1) THAT THE PRO-
BLEM OF LIMITING ARMS TRANSFERS WAS URGENT AND (2) TO HOLD
REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS TO EXPLORE CONCRETE MEASURES
THAT COULD BE TAKEN.

--IN MAY THE SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT (SSOD) ADOPTED

A PROGRAM OF ACTION CALLING FOR CONSULTATIONS AMONG SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS ON LIMITING ARMS TRANSFERS. US-SOVIET BILATERAL MEETINGS REPRESENT AN ATTEMPT TO BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT THAT UN MANDATE.

--EVENTS IN LATIN AMERICA, SUCH AS THE JUNE 22 DECLARATION BY THE EIGHT SIGNATORIES OF THE 1974 DECLARATION OF AYACUCHO CALLING FOR A LATIN AMERICAN AGREEMENT LIMITING CONVENTIONAL ARMS AND THE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OF MEXICO TOWARD THE SAME END, ALSO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORK OF RESTRAINING ARMS TRANSFERS.

B. OVERALL FRAMEWORK FOR RESTRAINT

--THE US OUTLINED A FRAMEWORK OF RESTRAINT TO THE SOVIETS, AS A WAY OF FOCUSING THE DELIVERATIONS. THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK CONSISTS OF THREE PARTS.

1. POLITICAL/LEGAL CRITERIA

--THESE CRITERIA WOULD BE BASED ON THE UN CHARTER, UN RESOLUTIONS, AND OTHER INTERNATIONALLY AGREED DOCUMENTS.

--THEY SHOULD SERVE TWO PURPOSES: (1) IDENTIFYING LEGAL CONSTRAINTS ON ARMS TRANSFERS; AND (2) IDENTIFYING RELEVANT POLITICAL FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN
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MAKING ARMS TRANSFER DECISIONS.

--A GOOD BASIS EXISTS FOR THE ELABORATION OF MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE.

2. MILITARY/TECHNICAL CRITERIA

--COMMONLY AGREED MILITARY/TECHNICAL CRITERIA TO SET BOUNDARIES ON THE TYPES AND AMOUNTS OF WEAPONS TO BE PROVIDED.

--THESE CRITERIA ARE EQUALLY AS IMPORTANT AS POLITICAL/LEGAL CRITERIA; AND AGREEMENT ON BOTH TYPES OF CRITERIA IS ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO HAVE A COHERENT AND COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR RESTRAINT.

3. REGIONAL APPLICATION

--ARRANGEMENTS TO APPLY CRITERIA IN REGIONAL CONTEXTS.

--IT IS IMPORTANT TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO CRITERIA THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE GENERAL AND ABSTRACT STATEMENTS OF

INTEREST, SUBJECT TO MANY DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS.

C. INTERIM RESTRAINT REGIME

--BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT, IN ADVANCE OF FINAL AGREEMENT ON CRITERIA, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH INTERIM RESTRAINT AGREEMENTS FOR SPECIFIC REGIONS.

-A BASIS WAS LAID THAT SUCH AGREEMENTS MIGHT CONSIST OF LISTS OF WEAPONS TO BE RESTRAINED.

--BOTH SIDES AGREED IT WAS POSSIBLE TO DISCUSS ANY REGION OR SUB-REGION OF THE WORLD, PROVIDED THEY WERE NOT ARTIFICIALLY CONTRIVED.

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D. ROLE OF OTHER SUPPLIERS/RECIPIENTS

--BOTH SIDES RECOGNIZED THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE PARTICIPATION OF OTHER SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS IN DEVELOPING AND/OR SUPPORTING ANY RESTRAINT REGIME.

--BOTH SIDES WERE HOPEFUL THAT OTHER SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS WOULD FIND IT IN THEIR INTERESTS TO SUPPORT ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT.

--WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS OUR POSITION THAT THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS OF RECIPIENTS MUST BE MET.

E. ASSESSMENT OF ROUND III AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

--THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE MOVEMENT TOWARD A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF GENERAL GUIDELINES OR CRITERIA FOR RESTRAINT IN ARMS TRANSFERS.

--THE SOVIETS AGAIN APPEARED TO TAKE THESE DISCUSSIONS SERIOUSLY. HOWEVER, THE NEXT ROUND--TENTATIVELY PLANNED FOR DECEMBER TO ENABLE BOTH SIDES TO UNDERTAKE THOROUGH PREPARATIONS--WILL PROVIDE A TEST OF THE PROSPECTS FOR NEAR-TERM SUCCESS OF CAT. END TEXT OF TALKING POINTS.

2. BENJELLOUN EXPRESSED VIEWS SIMILAR TO OTHER EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES UPON CONCLUSION OF BRIEFING (SEE PARA 4) THAT WHILE GOM SYMPATHETIC TO IDEA OF CONSTRAINT ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS, SOVIETS DO NOT HAVE ANY GUIDELINES, AND AS A RESULT, THERE APPEARS TO BE STRONG ODDS AGAINST RESTRAINT BEING SUCCESSFUL. HE NOTED THAT AFRICAN NATIONS

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ARE PRESENTLY RECEIVING LARGE AMOUNTS OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS FROM USSR. FURTHER, GOM VERY CONCERNED WITH EVER INCREASING SPREAD OF COMMUNISM IN AFRICA. HE ASKED WHETHER AFRICAN

NATIONS ARE AWARE OF CAT, AND ARE IN AGREEMENT? PM EXPLAINED THAT CERTAIN KEY AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS (IVORY COAST, MALI, GUINEA, SENEGAL, TANZANIA, NIGERIA, SUDAN, ZAIRE, GABON, ZAMBIA, LIBERIA, KENYA, AND CAMEROON) ARE BEING BRIEFED. FURTHER, REACTIONS BY THESE AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS FOR SUCCESS OF CAT HAVE BEEN CAUTIOUS. BENJELLOUN EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PROGRESS OF MEETING THIS DECEMBER WILL

INDICATE WHETHER SOVIETS SERIOUS ABOUT CAT. HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER OTHER ARMS SUPPLIERS WOULD BE BROUGHT INTO TALKS. PM EXPLAINED THAT WHILE BOTH US AND USSR RECOGNIZED IMPORTANCE OF ASSOCIATING OTHER ARMS SUPPLIERS WITH CAT DISCUSSIONS, US WANTED TO REACH SOME BASIC UNDERSTANDING WITH SOVIETS BEFORE BRINGING IN OTHER MAJOR ARMS SUPPLIERS. HOWEVER, OTHER MAJOR ARMS SUPPLIERS ARE BEING INFORMED OF TALKS.

3. EMBASSY MAY DRAW ON TALKING POINTS PARA 1 FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE.

4. BRIEFINGS IN NEA WILL BE GIVEN EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES OF EGYPT, JORDAN, IRAN, PAKISTAN, ISRAEL, INDIA AND SAUDI ARABIA. SELECTED COUNTRIES IN OTHER REGIONS ARE ALSO BEING BRIEFED. VANCE

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